



COPS Fact Sheet

Community Oriented Policing Services

www.usdoj.gov/cops/

COPS in Schools

“When our children's safety is at stake, we must take action – and we all must do our part.”

President Clinton

Program Information

Recent headlines about violence in our schools are resulting in a surge of interest in school safety. Unfortunately, these headline-making crimes are not isolated incidents.

- The National Center for Education Statistics reported that 74% of middle schools and 77% of high schools reported one or more violent incidents in their school.
- A recent Center for Disease Control survey reported that 20% of high school students carried weapons in the last month.
- According to a U.S. Department of Education report, 3,930 students between the ages of 5 and 17 were expelled for bringing a gun to school during the 1997-98 academic school year.

Many communities are discovering that trained, sworn law enforcement officers assigned to schools make a difference. The presence of these officers provide schools with on-site security and a direct link to local law enforcement agencies.

Community policing officers typically perform a variety of functions within the school. From teaching crime prevention and substance-abuse classes to monitoring troubled students to building respect for law enforcement among students, School Resource Officers combine the functions of law enforcement and education.

To help hire community policing officers to work in schools, the COPS Office is offering grants to local law enforcement agencies. The COPS in Schools initiative provides an incentive

for law enforcement agencies to build working relationships with schools to use community policing efforts to combat school violence.

The COPS in Schools initiative reduces the local match requirement for law enforcement agencies seeking to hire additional officers in and around schools.

Funding Requirements

Grants will be awarded to provide for a designated portion of the salary and benefits of each new officer over three years. The maximum is \$125,000 per officer; any remainder is paid with state or local funds. Funding begins when new officers are hired or on the award date (whichever is later). Funds are distributed over the course of the grant.

COPS grants must not replace funds that eligible agencies otherwise would have devoted to hire officers in the future. In other words, any hiring under the COPS in Schools program must be in addition to, not in lieu of, officers that otherwise would have been hired. **Grant recipients must develop a written plan to retain their COPS-funded officer positions after Federal funding ends. This plan must be submitted with the application. The COPS Office will monitor the grantee's implementation of its written retention plan for one full budget cycle following expiration of the three-year grant.**

Program Requirements

To be eligible to receive funding under this grant program, applicants must:

- be eligible to receive funding under the current guidelines established for the Universal Hiring Program (UHP);

- provide assurance that the officers employed under this program will be assigned to work in primary or secondary schools;
- enter into a partnership agreement with either a specific school official or with an official with general educational oversight authority in that jurisdiction.

In addition to these program requirements, applicants must provide a narrative that addresses each of the following areas:

- Problem Identification and Justification

For Example:

Problem Identification: Gang violence adjacent to or within schools.

Justification: Documentation such as crime data, information on the number of gang members in a particular school, number of suspension and expulsions related to gang activities, school survey, and complaints from the community.

- Community Policing Strategies

Examples include conflict mediation, mentoring activities, gang mediation, problem solving projects, and truancy programs.

- Quality and Level of Commitment to Program

Examples include the amount of dedicated officer hours deployed to school activities, the duration and quality of the proposed program, evidence of previous successes, and a description of the impacted or targeted areas.

- Link to Community Policing

Information on how proposed activities are linked to an overall organizational community policing strategy.

In addition, all applicants must submit a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for the COPS in Schools Grant Program. The MOU, which must be signed by both the Law Enforcement Executive and the School Official with general educational oversight, is an agreement between the parties involved whose purpose is to define the roles and responsibilities of the individuals and partners involved.

All COPS in Schools awards will contain an “Additional Grant Condition” that must be signed and returned to the COPS Office. This grant condition requires the funded officer (s) and a school administrator to attend a COPS in Schools Training. The COPS Office will reimburse grantees for the training, per diem, travel, and lodging for attendance of *required* participants up to a maximum of \$1,100.

Deadline

The next application deadline is June 16, 2000. Applications must be postmarked by this date to be considered for funding. This deadline is necessary due to the limited funding available. Applications that are received for this deadline that are not funded this Fiscal Year because of limited funding opportunities, will be carried over for consideration in Fiscal Year 2001.

For More Information

To obtain a copy of an application or for more information, please call the U.S. Department of Justice Response Center at 1-800-421-6770 or visit the COPS website at www.usdoj.gov/cops/

Departments that have a pending application under the Universal Hiring Program and that are interested in applying that request to the COPS in Schools initiative should contact their grant advisor at 1-800-421-6770.